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FROM: PARIS

TO: Secretary of State

NO: POLTO 1651, DECEMBER 11, 9 PM

SENT DEPARTMENT POLTO 1651; REPEATED INFORMATION LONDON POLTO 451,
BONN POLTO 286

DEPARTMENT PASS DEFENSE

REFERENCE: POLTO 1633

SPAAK LED OFF NAC BERLIN DISCUSSION AFTERNOON DECEMBER 10
BY STRESSING NECESSITY GIVING OTHER NATIONS CHANCE TO
EXPRESS VIEWS BEFORE THOSE OF FOUR POWERS FIRMED UP.

ITALY NOTED PRESENT NAC DISCUSSION COULD ONLY BE PRELIMINARY
AND REAL CONSULTATION SHOULD TAKE PLACE IN MINISTERIAL
MEETING... ~~THOUGHT~~ WEST SHOULD BE FIRM AGAINST RUSSIAN
BLACKMAIL, SHOULD NOT TAKE SOLELY NEGATIVE STAND BUT
SHOULD OFFER CONSTRUCTIVE PROPOSAL. THOUGHT IS PAPER
(POLTO 1599) WAS GOOD STARTING POINT.

GREECE AGREED AND ADDED WEST MUST OUTLINE BRIEFLY LEGAL
POSITION. MAIN POINT THAT BERLINERS CANNOT BE ABANDONED.
BELGIUM NOTED THREE POINTS FOR CONSIDERATION: (1) MUST BE
IMMEDIATE REACTION TO SOVIET NOTE STATING (A) AGREEMENTS
CANNOT BE UNILATERALLY CHANGED, (B) RUSSIANS PLAYING
WITH DANGEROUS FIRE, (C) NATO FIRM IN RESISTING SOVIET
DEMANDS; (2) IF USSR TAKES ACTION AS THREATENED IN NOTE,
WHAT HAPPENS? CAN WE AVOID CONTACT WITH GDR? (3) WHAT
IS FINAL ANSWER? SUGGESTED PROPOSING ALL BERLIN BE FREE
CITY WITH ACCESS TO WEST GUARANTEED AND NOTED RUMORS
SOVIETS WOULD ACCEPT SUCH PROPOSAL. ASKED IF GERMANS
REGARDED BERLIN SITUATION AS INSOLUBLE APART FROM SOLUTION
WHOLE GERMAN PROBLEM.

GERMANY

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GERMANY, AFTER NOTING USEFULNESS OF NAC DISCUSSION, ASSURED NAC QUESTIONS RAISED, ESPECIALLY THOSE BY BELGIUM, VERY MUCH ON MIND OF GERMANS. SPECIAL FOUR POWER GROUP CONSIDERING PROBLEM BUT TOO EARLY TO GIVE THEIR VIEWS. CERTAIN THAT REPLY WILL NOT BE MERELY NEGATIVE. ON GOVERNMENT INSTRUCTIONS ASSURED NAC CHANCELLOR IN RECENT STATEMENT HAD NOT MEANT BERLIN PROBLEM SHOULD BE SETTLED OUTSIDE GENERAL SOLUTION BUT INTENDED MERELY POINT OUT THERE WAS 6 MONTH DEADLINE FOR SOME SETTLEMENT ON BERLIN.

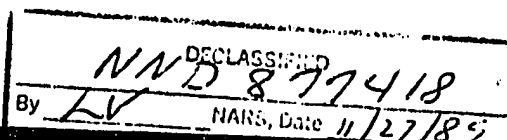
FRANCE THOUGHT THREE TYPES PROBLEM INVOLVED, I.E., PROCEDURAL, BASIC (SHOULD REPLY BE NEGATIVE OR POSITIVE AND COVER BERLIN ALONE OR GERMANY AS A WHOLE), AND IMMEDIATE (WHAT IF GDR REPLACES SOVIETS AT CHECK POINTS? WHAT ABOUT AIRLIFT? REPLENISHMENT OF STOCKS?). DID NOT THINK MINISTERIAL MEETING WOULD PRODUCE FINAL REPLY. WELCOMED IS DOCUMENT. THOUGHT BERLIN QUESTION SHOULD BE DEALT WITH IN NATO COMMUNIQUE. THERE SHOULD NEITHER BE A COUNTERPROPOSAL NOR A FLAT REFUSAL WHICH MIGHT INDUCE SOVIETS TO INCREASE PRESSURE AND STEP UP TIME TABLE OF ACTION.

UK AGREED WITH FRANCE MINISTERIAL MEETING UNLIKELY TO PRODUCE FINAL POSITION. SAID (1) SOVIET PROPOSALS UN-ACCEPTABLE; (2) SOVIET POSITION WRONG JURIDICALLY; (3) WEST CANNOT ABANDON BERLIN. FELT THIS SERIOUS SOVIET MOVE IN WHICH KHRUSHCHEV PERSONALLY INVOLVED. AGREED WEST MUST BE FIRM BUT ALSO DEVELOP POSITIVE APPROACH. THIS EASY TO SAY BUT DIFFICULT DEVELOP. FOREIGN OFFICE FELT REPLY SHOULD MEET FIVE TESTS: (1) SHOULD NOT PUT US IN DISADVANTAGEOUS MILITARY POSITION IF SOVIETS ACCEPT; (2) SHOULD APPEAL TO PUBLIC OPINION OF GERMANS AND BERLINERS; (3) SHOULD ALSO APPEAL TO NATO PUBLIC OPINION; (4) SHOULD BE DIFFICULT FOR SOVIETS TO REFUSE TO DISCUSS; (5) SHOULD CONTAIN ELEMENT OF NOVELTY. RE IS PAPER THOUGHT FIRST FOUR PARAGRAPHS GOOD BUT HAD DOUBTS ON FIFTH PARAGRAPH. FELT THERE SHOULD BE NO INTERIM REPLY SINCE THIS WOULD ENCOURAGE FURTHER COMMUNICATION FROM SOVIETS.

US WELCOMED NATO DISCUSSION AND AGREED WITH UK THAT FIRST 4 PARAGRAPHS OF IS PAPER GOOD. AGREED NO FINAL REPLY COULD BE DRAFTED BY TIME OF NATO MINISTERIAL MEETING.

EXPRESSED

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EXPRESSED SOME DOUBT RE ADVISABILITY. THOUGHT MINISTERIAL MEETING SHOULD RESULT IN FIRM YET CONSTRUCTIVE STATEMENT OF PRINCIPLE ON BERLIN. THEN READ SUMMARY KHRUSHCHEV-HUMPHREY CONVERSATIONS (TOPOL 1952) TO VERY ATTENTIVE COUNCIL.

DENMARK AGREED SOVIET PROPOSALS UNACCEPTABLE AND THOUGHT WOULD BE WISER NOT HAVE FIRM REPLY DRAFTED BY MINISTERIAL MEETING. SUGGESTED THERE BE STATEMENT BY THREE POWERS WHO HAD RIGHTS IN BERLIN, SUPPORTED BY NATO.

CANADA WELCOMED THIS TYPE DISCUSSION IN NAC. HOPED FOUR POWERS WOULD MAKE NO STATEMENT BEFORE MINISTERIAL MEETING AND THAT FORMULA WOULD BE FOUND TO SAY FOUR POWERS CONCERNED WOULD CONTINUE TO CONSULT OTHER NINE COUNTRIES.

SPAAK CONCLUDED DISCUSSION BY STRESSING ALL NATO COUNTRIES HAD POLITICAL RESPONSIBILITY IN THIS MATTER, THOUGHT THE RESPONSIBILITY OF FOUR IS A SPECIAL ONE. COMMUNIQUE' WILL BE DIFFICULT DRAFT BUT MUST MAKE CLEAR TO WEST AND SOVIETS LINE BEYOND WHICH WE CANNOT GO, THUS MEETING ESSENTIAL NEED TO LEAVE LINE OF RETREAT FOR RUSSIANS. VERY IMPORTANT THAT WESTERN PUBLIC OPINION MUST UNDERSTAND IF WE ABANDON BERLIN AND ITS 2 AND A HALF MILLION PEOPLE, IT WILL BE BEGINNING PIECEMEAL ADVANCE BY SOVIET POWER AKIN TO WAY HITLER OPERATED. STRESSED THAT COMPARISON BETWEEN SIMILARITY OF SOVIET OPERATIONS AND THOSE OF HITLER WOULD APPEAL PARTICULARLY TO WESTERN OPINION. WE MUST BE CLEAR IN WHAT WE MEAN BY BEING FIRM BUT MUST NOT GET IN POSITION OF MAKING WAR TO PREVENT RUSSIANS FROM LEAVING BERLIN. THOUGHT WE WOULD BE FACED EVENTUALLY WITH PROBLEM DEALING IN SOME MANNER WITH GDR. THOUGHT IF SOVIETS SUGGESTED SETTling BERLIN QUESTION ALONE WE SHOULD TELL THEM THEY CAN'T EXPECT US ABANDON BERLIN EXCEPT IN CONTEXT SETTLEMENT GERMAN PROBLEM AS WHOLE.

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